Dear Friends, Colleagues and Partners,

None of us know when things will return to normal or even when we will be able to see patients again. However, fortunately, much of the country seems to be over the worst for the time being and it would be prudent to start to prepare for a re-opening of our practices. **In conjunction with my fellow former President of the British College of Aesthetic Medicine, Dr Paul Charlson**, I have put down some thoughts on how we can prepare psychologically, physically and professionally.

Attached are protocols, policies and a training programme for all your staff which can act as a blueprint to demonstrate you are returning with the principles of best practice in mind. The last part of this resource is a draft plan for communicating to your patients with a sample email setting out the steps you are taking to protect them.

**Psychological preparation:** many of us have laid down the tools of aesthetic practice and returned to the frontline shoulder to shoulder with our medical and nursing colleagues. Others have seen their practices teeter on the verge of collapse. For those of us who have been fortunate to escape infection, there remains the fear of catching the virus or passing it on to loved ones and patients. All will have stories to tell, as will our patients. Do not forget the collegiate support we can give and receive from each other.

Going back to work will challenge us to examine what we do and why we do it. It has always been my contention that Aesthetic Medicine is a sub discipline of medical practice which provides a significant benefit to society and must be delivered at the same high professional standards as expected in all disciplines of practice. Take time to reaffirm why you have chosen aesthetic medicine and the ethics we all subscribe to.

**Physical preparation:** At this time we are also reminded of our personal health obligations in Good Medical Practice and The Nursing Code to seek support should you feel the pressures of the recent months may affect the care of your patients. This has been a traumatic time and it is to be expected that some of us will have been physically and emotionally affected. No matter what economic pressure each of us feel we should ensure we are in good physical health and free from infection as we re-open and thereafter. Part of this is protecting ourselves properly and those who work with us. **The Healthxchange Group**, along with our partners, are committed to stocking adequate supplies of PPE, compliant with EU Regulations 2018 and DOH, ready to supply your needs. We also give you a firm commitment of an open book pricing policy so you can be assured that supplies are available and accessible at reasonable prices.

**Professional preparation:** These last few fallow weeks may give an opportunity to refresh skills with online seminars and reading so you can confidently re-enter practice at the top of your game. Be sure to understand the principles of infection control and in particular those related to Covid 19. Following local guidelines is an obligation and we are all expected to set an example as healthcare professionals. It is the least we can do to show appreciation to our colleagues who have risked their health on the frontline. This will change from region to region but the principles are the same...'creating a safe medical environment for your patients'. All the formats are in Word and can be made bespoke for your practice and entered into your appraisal folder to demonstrate how you fulfil your obligations professionally. The training programme and the infection control resource are a draft plan, to help you educate all your staff. Please add or configure for your own needs. Remember staff on subsidy scheme can participate in training of this type without losing your payments. Do not forget the importance of **medical insurance.** During this period some of us may have may have cancelled our malpractice insurance exposing you to claims arising from previous treatments even if you take up a new policy. I am pleased to say **Hamilton Fraser** have negotiated a ‘run off cover’ for your previous policy for those who take up insurance with them again. Do not let this professional obligation be your downfall: contact them and ensure you are covered.

**Communicating with patients:** Perhaps the most important thing you can do in preparation is to gain the confidence of your patients by demonstrating that you have created a safe space for them. Communicate this by email well in advance and on your website, re-inforce the message when they call for an appointment and underpin that sense of protection through positive actions by you and your staff in surgery. Strategies such as longer appointment spacing and one patient in the surgery at a time will enable social distancing and allow you to safely practice earlier. This can be made efficient by interspersing remote consultations which can be used as a tool early in the cycle to drive business. I have attached policies to help you plan your strategy.

Be safe and keep well but most of all be proud that we are all part of a profession that measured up to public expectations when they were most needed.

Best wishes,
John

**Dr John Curran**

**Chairman**

**Healthxchange Group**